

“Family Table Talk”

John 13:31-14:15

As we come to John 13:31, Jesus has washed the disciples' feet, commanded them to show the same love to one another (even the Judases) and Jesus shared someone in the 'family' is going to betray Him. They are all shocked and still in the dark about Judas once he leaves the table, thinking Jesus has simply sent him on an errand. But now that Judas is gone, Jesus can have some serious conversation with the 11. Things He couldn't share with Judas present.

And remember, Jesus and the 11 disciples are still celebrating the Passover, reclining at the table and now Jesus tells them some hard things that they don't want to hear. The first one He just told them – one of them will betray Him. While they wrestle with that thought and wonder who would do such a thing, Jesus drops another bomb: 'I will be with you only a little longer . . . where I am going you cannot come.' And yet He prefaced that with

Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. ³² If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

The betrayal results directly in the crucifixion yet Jesus says 'this is to the glory of God'. Then Jesus says 'I'm going away' but in vv.15-18 He'll say this is for your benefit. How can we have this same perspective as Jesus does in the hard things we struggle with in life? Because Jesus' goal was to glorify God in all that He said and did. And if we're to follow Jesus' teaching and do as He did then Jesus wants us

To Make Glorifying God the Goal of our Life **(13:31-14:6)**

We've talked about this hundreds of times over the years I've been here. This is our purpose in life. We've made this our purpose statement as a church: 'Share the joy of God [good news of the gospel] as we work together to glorify God.' If we work together to make God known through all that we do, or reveal God's perspective on everything we do, then we'll show and share the good news about God's Son, who at the end of His life (17:4) will conclude 'I have brought You glory by doing the work You gave me to do.'

God Himself is going to fill the world with His presence/glory (Hab. 2:14) one day. That's what He's working towards. So it only makes sense for us to join God in what He's doing. So if God is going to make His presence known everywhere, then it only makes sense that we make His presence known in our part of the world and those parts of the world we are connected to through the missions/missionaries we support. This means we have to be spiritually mature to have God's perspective

In every aspect of life (13:31-33)

Even the hardest things in life; especially as Jesus says here, death. Jesus clearly says God is going to be glorified now because as Judas leaves he will betray Jesus, who will then be arrested, crucified, die but will rise from the dead. And in Jesus' death God is exalted because we see how much He loves us that He sends His one and Only Son to die in our place for our sins. If we only see what's happening in front of us we will not understand how God can be glorified through the hardship

we are going through. We have to see around it and beyond it. Many passages in the Bible say that God uses trials to mature us. Only, if we're spiritually in tune with God will they mature us.

Look at the disciples when Jesus says these things; are they focused on the glory of God in what's about to happen? No, they only see the pain they will experience. Why do they respond this way? Because they are not spiritually mature yet to see what Jesus is saying. You and I have 2000 years of hindsight to see what Jesus means. We also have the Holy Spirit who helps us see things through God's eyes. The disciples would see this soon.

Jesus says, 'God's about to be glorified now that the crucifixion plans are in motion and I'm going away and you can't be where I am for a while. So love one another as I have loved you, and everyone will know you're My disciples as a result.'

Jesus just modelled this self-sacrificing love by washing their feet. Bend low to serve others. Meet their needs. Show you care for one another. How does that glorify God and reflect Jesus to a lost world? Judas will betray Jesus. The 11 will abandon Jesus before the next morning. In their sinful selfishness they can either blame each other or quit on one another (and forget all what Jesus said) or you can come together in unity to continue what Jesus started. Which one do you think will glorify God? Criticizing other believers? Abandoning your fellows believers? Or coming together and doing what Jesus commanded?

This is the main way we glorify God:

By living an obedient life (vv.33-35)

If we're obeying Jesus' commands then we will serve one another; that will be our focus. Doing what God asks by serving God together so His message gets out. We'll make decisions that will put God first in our life. The unsaved will wonder why we're living like that – and not the way of the world. And we'll say basically because my life is about bringing God glory. Jesus is trying to tell His followers to make your focus as I have, bring God glory by obeying my words.

Peter then asks Jesus a question: 'Lord, how do you want us to love one another?' No. He only heard about what bothered him. 'Lord, where are you going?' *"Where I am going you cannot come but you will follow later."*

Peter must have known Jesus was referring to death. He had told them enough times because Peter bravely says 'I'll lay down my life for you.' He wouldn't say that if he wasn't thinking that Jesus meant death. As much as Peter thought he was strong enough to die for Jesus, he wasn't there yet. And he would deny knowing Jesus three times before the morning.

Again, this is all taking place around the table. Everyone is listening. These are hard things to hear. Ch. 14:1 is not something new. The conversation continues. There still having a few bites to eat or maybe they are cleaning up. And Jesus knows this is hard so he says

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ²In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴You know the way to the place where I am going."

Now we know He's talking about His own death because He says "I'm going to be with My Father. And no, you can't go there yet. But don't let this trouble you." Yes, but death always troubles

us. It's the hardest thing we experience and it's one of the hardest things to keep God's perspective on. 'Stop, being troubled about this' is what Jesus literally says. How can we stop being troubled about our own deaths as well as the deaths of others? The answer is clear:

Grow Stronger in our Faith **(14:1-15)**

"Trust in God, trust also in Me". The word for trust is believe'. How do we overcome our fear of anything? Jesus says

Alleviate your fears through the Word **(vv.1-6)**

If you're worried, confused or afraid of something we should always ask 'What does God's Word say?' And Jesus' words are the Word of God. And He tells us He is in God's house right now building rooms for us. Is this a good thing or a bad thing? Good thing. Is this a reno job or a new build? Jesus' doesn't have a TV show called from 'Fixer upper to Fabulous' or 'Lord, save my Reno'. In the New Jerusalem everything is new. If it were not so I would have told you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am. You know how to get there." By faith. Did you believe in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection to get you saved? Do you believe Jesus is quite capable of securing your salvation? Then believe He'll look after you when you die and believe He'll look after you when those you love die.

When our loved ones die we're broken and sad; they're not. We cry; they don't.

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful servants. [Ps. 116:15]

Why? Because they are receiving the rewards of trusting God and Jesus. This is God's perspective about our deaths. I seriously doubt Jesus will apologize to us when we die and get to be where He is. 'Hi Bob. Yeah I'm really sorry about taking you away from earth. Heaven isn't much but you'll get used to it after a while. It will grow on you eventually.'

Death is the hardest thing we face on earth. But we have to trust God for ourselves and for those who go before we do. We are sad because we miss them of course. But they are not and they know we're coming at some point too.

Everyone is getting in on the table talk here. First Peter shoots Jesus a question and now Thomas in v.5 after Jesus says 'You know the way to the place where I'm going'. Before we shake our heads at the disciples' questions, this is what happens when you're letting life's situations trouble you and you don't go to God's Word. You fail to put practice faith. You fail to see things from God's viewpoint. And Jesus calmly reminds Thomas and all the others you know the way to heaven because you know Me. 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'

We know these verses don't we. Why? Because they're direct answers asked by troubled believers. 'Lord, my loved one just died!' 'I know, they're okay. They are with me in My father's house and you will be too one day.' 'Lord, how can I be sure?' 'Remember what I said? I'm the way, the truth and the life ...' Keep my perspective. Have a biblical viewpoint on all of life. If I can glorify My Father through My death, God can be glorified through yours as well. And anything you want to do that focuses on Me'.

One of the things that had to have troubled the 11 in all this death talk was no doubt unsaid. *'If Jesus is going away, what are we supposed to do? We left everything to follow Him? Do we just go our separate ways and sit around waiting for Him to come back?'* No, Jesus will go on to say:

Glorify the Father by continuing Jesus' works (14:7-15)

Jesus wants to get back to helping the disciples to carry on glorifying God and Himself in His absence. They are stuck on Jesus' death and still thinking about heaven. Now Philip has a comment based on Jesus' answer in v.7. Jesus said 'If you really knew Me you would know the Father as well. From now on you have known Him and see Him.'

Philip says "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

What was he thinking when he said that? He might have thought, 'Show us the Father now and we'll believe you.' Or, 'Show us the Father now and let's all go to be with You now and see Him.' But Jesus has to remind His disciples that what he called them to do isn't over with His death; its just starting.

Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. ¹² I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. ¹⁵ "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

With the talk about His Father Jesus brings the conversation back to where it started, 'glorify God through the works Jesus calls us to do.' He assures Philip and the others that to see Jesus is to see God. They are inseparably linked in eternity and character and purpose. In a few verses Jesus will join the Holy Spirit in all this as well. For now He reminds them not to lose faith: 'believe Me when I say the Father is in me; the evidence is seen through my miracles and works.'

And by the way, if you have faith in Me you will keep doing My work and glorify the Father as I did.' How? By doing greater works than I did? Greater? Like walk on water or raise people from the dead? The disciples and Paul would perform some miracles but Jesus is talking more about the magnitude of His work through more people. This is seen immediately at Pentecost when the disciples preach the gospel and 3000 people are saved and then by Ch. 4 its up to 5000. Whereas Jesus focused His ministry in Israel the disciples would take the gospel to Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. How will they be able to accomplish these things? By asking Jesus through prayer who sits at the right hand of God and by continuing to love and serve each other. You can't carry on God's work and bring glory to God by being alienated from one another.

Jesus began teaching them that they need to love one another as He loved them. He has now brought it back to that command after the disciples were distracted and disturbed by Jesus' statement of His death and His departure to God. Being troubled by life's circumstances distracted them from the mission Jesus gave them: do my works and glorify God.

And that describes us too. What's distracted you from glorifying God as the focus in your life? Yes but I'm not called to ministry, you might be thinking. That's not what Jesus is saying. He said glorify God with your life regardless of where you live or what you do or what circumstances you are

facing. In life and death do all to God's glory. Or as the apostle Paul said, "Whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, do it all for the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:13).

Raise your children in a way that God is the focus. Do your work as if God is your boss. Care for the people in Your life the way Jesus would care for them. Obey Jesus' command to love one another so that you will get people's attention who will ask why are you so nice, kind, patient, etc., when most of the world doesn't act like that?

Paul said it in a different way that connects us back to John 14:14 when Jesus says to ask anything in His Name. In Col. 3:17 Paul tells us to

¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him

"In the name of Jesus" means according to His will or as He would do or in His authority. 'In the name of' and 'to the glory of' are often used synonymously. To pray in the Name of Jesus means to pray as Jesus would pray or in all that He stands for. Which rules out 'praying in Jesus' name' for something we only want that is not God's will. John himself will write in his first epistle,

^{1 John 5:14} This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."

God's will and God's glory are similar in that we want to pray and do what God would have us do, that will show God in everything that we are involved with in life. And this presents us with a good way to ask ourselves is what I'm doing, saying, even thinking making God more known or showing people God is the priority of my life?

Jesus revealed the Father to His disciples and world where He lived because the Father dwelt in Him and He did His Father's will. You could see from his life that He was there to show His Father. Likewise, we His followers are to reflect God where we live to those around us by choosing His will over ours and seeking to show by our choices God is the priority of our life. When we get distracted by life's concerns or are troubled by disappointments and hard things, go back to God's Word and be reassured of what Jesus says is true. And, talk about these things with one another, Discuss how can we love one another and reveal God's glory where we live and in what we're doing? Those would be great topics to discuss around your table.

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If you have any comments or questions about this message please
contact us at olivet@rideau.net